ADDRESS

—TO THE—

ELECTORS OF THE RIDING OF ADDINGTON

GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1895.

GENTLEMEN,—

Four years ago it was your pleasure to elect me as your representative in the Parliament of our country. A stranger to many of you, untried and unknown, you nevertheless honored me with your confidence and support. It was with a keen sense of the importance of the duties you entrusted to me, and therefore with much misgiving, that I entered upon their discharge. For four years I have represented you; whether worthily or not it is for you to say.

By voice and vote I supported only such measures as I believed, and still believe, to be for our country's welfare.

I advocated the freeing of trade from the shackles of protection, and that the customs tariff should be based upon the requirements of the public service, and not, as it is now, upon the principle of protection; that it should be reduced to the needs of honest, economical and efficient government, and so adjusted as to make free the necessaries of every day life. The existing tariff has developed monopolies and combines. It has enriched the manufacturer, but it has impoverished the consumer. It has increased the population of our cities but decreased our rural population. It has enhanced the price of city property but ruinously lowered the value of farm lands. It is class legislation—oppressive, vicious, and unjust.

It is called a National Policy, yet under it the destiny of the North-West has been placed in the hands of land speculators instead of in the hands of actual settlers, by whose toil alone the country can be made great.

Under it we have failed to develop our mines. Untold mineral wealth lies in the earth untouched because we lack the men, money and markets promised us by the advocates of protection.

Our North-West unsettled, room for millions there, yet we fail to hold the emigrants who come to us; and sadder still, we fail to hold our sons. Land in abundance, here in Ontario as well as in the North-West, yet by class legislation we see driven from our side those stalwart young Canadians, forced to turn their backs on the land they love, sent abroad to spend their splendid energies in the upbuilding of another nation. Our public lands must be reserved for the actual settler; effectual legislation must be enacted that will protect labor from the oppression of the combine; markets must be opened up before we can hope for that full measure of success which should be the lot of all Canadians.

By windy declaration of their loyalty, by loud proclamation of their attachment for the mother land, by frantic assertion of their faith in British connection, the advocates of the policy of plunder, which they misname the National Policy, seek to drown the demands of the people for relief from its oppression.

I denounce their policy. It is a disloyal policy. It imperils British connection. It robs Great Britain of the fruit of that connection by impeding her trade with us, and discriminating against her. It levies a heavier duty on dutiable goods imported from her than on similar goods imported from the United States. It directs our trade to the American rather than to the British manufacturer. Yet it fails to open to us the American market that we may freely sell therein.

Having regard to the position of the two countries, I think it desirable that there should be the most friendly relations and broad and liberal trade intercourse between Canada and the United States. The interests alike of the Dom inion and the Empire would be advanced by the establishing of such relations. I believe an honest attempt to negotiate a trade treaty on terms honorable to both countries, just to Great Britain and profitable to Canada, would be crowned with success. I believe such a treaty would meet with the hearty approval and sanction of the Imperial Government, and should be made without delay.

The revelations made at Ottawa of the utter corruption in the management and expenditure of public moneys, which for years past has existed under the rule of the party in power, must have deeply shocked many, who in the past gave that party their confidence and support. Wrongdoing in public affairs is as indefensible as wrong doing in private concerns—nay, it is worse because it involves a wilful breach of trust. Such wrongdoing as was revealed at Ottawa degrades the fair name of our country and calls for the uncompromising condemnation of the people. I desire to see our public service freed from the presence of men—be they ministers or messengers—who have shown themselves to be unworthy of confidence, incompetent, dishonest, or corrupt.

I demand the strictest economy in the expenditure of our public funds. Self-denial and economy must be practiced if we desire to free our country from the enormous debt now crippling her.

I demand the abolition of the Franchise Act and the repeal of the gerrymander—twin evils, conceived by the party in power, born of a desire to hold office whether the people so willed it or not.

The experience of the quarter century of its existence has demonstrated the utter uselessness of the Canadian Senate under the present mode of appointment. It is independent of the people, uncontrolled by public opinion, and is out of harmony with the principles of popular government. It should be radically reformed or abolished.

From time to time I have submitted to you the official report of what I felt it to be my duty to say in the House, in support of my views on these and other public questions. I hope you have done me the honor to read these reports. They are the record of my standing on the public questions at issue in this election.

I have the honor to inform you I am again a candidate in Addington for a seat in the House of Commons as your representative. Judge me on my record, and if you deem me worthy, permit me most respectfully and earnestly to solicit your vote and influence, and to remain,

Ever your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. DAWSON.

PLEVNA, ONT.

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